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The last interesting event, that I remember, was our sitting in Governour Carver's chair in the barber's shop at Plymouth.

Such are the incidents and reflections, which have pleased your friend ; but the greatest of my pleasures was the society of my companions ; and it was not the least of them to return.



*A Retreat for the Sane.*

Huc propius me  
Dum doceo insanire omnes, vos ordine adite.  
HOR.

MR. EDITOR,

It is obvious, that in the present state of this country, when very little money can be spared from individual and national wants, even to publick institutions of the most general and acknowledged utility, none should be undertaken, but upon the surest and most permanent foundation, and of which the practicability, as well as usefulness is perfectly well ascertained. It becomes then important when a project of great and common interest is afoot, the plan and conduct of which, being once decided upon, do not readily admit of alteration, that a liberal discussion of the subject should previously be had, and the various obstacles to it freely exposed. Nor should the investigation in such cases be limited to those only, who, from their occupations and course of thought, might be supposed the most competent to decide questions of that particular nature. Many of the hints which fall, as it were by chance, from the comparatively stupid and unlettered, may, in the hands of the wise and well informed, be turned to very good account. The above remarks are made, by way of apology for offering a few thoughts upon the recent plan of an hospital for the Insane. I am well aware that in touching upon this subject, and advancing those notions about it which a most careful and thorough investigation has caused me to adopt, I have very many difficulties to contend with ; difficulties the more hard to be overcome, because they take their origin in our strongest and most confirmed passions and prejudices, and are fostered and established by the usual modes of education. A deep sense, however, of the good ef-

fects to be produced by my opinions, upon the advancement of civilization, the progress of true knowledge, and the permanent happiness of mankind ; and the recollection that no important revolution in publick opinion has ever been brought about, but with the greatest opposition, and by very slow degrees, has encouraged me. I shall not pretend to enter at great length into the subject ;—a brief statement of some of the most prominent objections to this plan, as it now stands, together with my own theory respecting it, will comprise all I have to say.

To effect a separation between the sane and insane persons of the community, seems indeed to be a most desirable object, take it in whatever point of view we may ; but the manner and means of best effecting this separation, under existing circumstances, is not so plain and obvious, I apprehend, as some may choose to think it, but will be found, on the contrary, to require no little consideration and forethought. The first, and fundamental error of the intelligent gentlemen who have planned this institution, arises, I conceive, from an incorrect estimate of the number of insane persons in the community. Since my getting into years, and retiring from active business, I have been in the habit of devoting much of my time to works which treat of the mind. In pursuing this course, I chanced to take up, some years ago, a treatise upon mental diseases, written by a very eminent physician of this country, since deceased, in which it was stated, as a well ascertained and undeniable fact, that about two thirds of the inhabitants of this world were not in their right minds. Having never before turned my thoughts that way, I was at first greatly astonished at the doctrine, and almost questioned the sanity of the learned author himself ; being induced however, from its novelty, to look further into the matter, I very soon came fully into his opinion, and have ever since been the more and more strengthened in it. In consequence of the late successful attempt at the establishment of the above institution, I was lead, with the assistance of a friend who is well versed in these things, to make some calculations as to the relative numbers of the sane and insane in this country, and after a very laborious and exact estimate, we arrived at the following results.

Taking the term insane, in its most general signification, to comprehend all persons of disordered minds, we classed

them under such several heads, as their different degrees of insanity seemed to demand, and after this manner found, that the number of those totally deprived of reason, and who in vulgar language are denominated *Stark Mad*, amounted to about *one* out of every *thousand* persons;—*Staring*, to about *one* out of every *hundred*;—*Insane*, in its most confined sense, to about *twenty five* out of a *hundred*, or one quarter part;—*Persons beside themselves*, to about *fifty* out of a *hundred*;—*Insane in its most extensive sense, deranged or cracked*—which three terms are nearly synonymous—to about *nine hundred* out of every *thousand*; this last class being understood to include in it all those going before. I might here easily enumerate the various symptoms by which these several species of insanity are distinguished; point out the kinds most prevalent in particular sections of the country; and throw in some suggestions as to the probable causes of this difference, founded on an investigation of the local situation, air, and soil of the different parts of America, and the laws, education, and habits of the people; but as this is not absolutely essential to my present object, and might appear invidious, I shall omit it. Some may think this an exaggerated, or mistaken account, but we assure them, that had we not passed over unnoticed, all that immense class of persons who are deficient in *common sense*, the list would have swelled to a size surpassing credibility, and the number of sane left, been hardly worth the reckoning. We shall leave it to those who have the management of the institution, to determine, how they can accommodate, at one time, even so small a part of these, as will prevent only the continued increase of the main body.

In the next place, have we sufficient grounds for our belief in the restoration of these unfortunate persons?

As this institution is established for the purposes of cure, and not as a place of deposit, it is supposed the patients will be selected, principally from the three last classes above mentioned, the other two presenting, for the most part, decidedly hopeless cases. Now I cannot but fear, that there are some obstacles to the cure of these last, which will be found well nigh insurmountable. One of the principal of these arises from a great unseasonableness of the necessary applications. When a person by some unlucky rap on the head, or violent internal disorder, becomes of a sudden downright mad, so as

to make chains and a straight jacket essential articles of his toilet, every one sees at once what the matter is, and he is taken in hand by the physicians, without loss of time; but these other kinds of insanity, not presenting any very violent symptoms, the disease often comes to be incurable before people are apprized of its nature. The deception is the greater in such instances, because the persons, who rank under these classes of insane, particularly the last, are generally the most stirring, noisy, prominent men in the community, and before they are found out, get the character (from those who are not too intimate with them) of being what the world calls, *devilish clever fellows*.

To come to the fact, this disease is often taken at a much earlier period of life than we are apt to imagine,

‘Primaque lux vitæ prima furoris erat,’

And some think it is not unfrequently drawn in with the mother’s milk. Its first indications are then naturally enough laid to the account of youthful spirit, wild oats, eccentricity, remarkable genius, &c. &c. until after a while, when the subject gets forward into life, some such unfortunate act is committed, as cannot be misconstrued. Medical men, and the sane part of society, foresee indeed the issue, long before things come to this pass, but how are they to persuade the prejudiced relatives, and bulk of the community, (who, it is to be observed, are most of them in different stages of the same disorder,) that men who are in the very heart of all the bustle, and activity, and parade of the world, are fit subjects for an insane hospital?

‘Nimirum insanus paucis videatur, eo quod

‘Maxima pars hominum morbo jactetur eodem.’

‘When all are mad, where all are like opprest,

‘Who can discern one mad man from the rest.’

But, Sir, supposing these difficulties not so great, as I have thought them to be, another question comes up, of deep interest to every individual, respecting the constitutionality of such an establishment. On turning over our constitution the other day with a view to this, I felt some hesitation upon the point, whether insanity could be offered in denial of the right of suffrage. It may seem somewhat strange, that I should have given in for a moment to the least doubt about a matter, so perfectly well settled in the English books; but my idea was,

that possibly the spirit of our government might vary the case. And in truth, sir, the more I canvassed the subject, the more was this notion confirmed. Upon recurrence to usage, in this particular, I could not find a single instance in which a rejection was allowed on such grounds. I have moreover since learned from several first rate politicians, that it would be considered but a poor subterfuge in these times against the acts of a majority, that the course of their conduct afforded convincing proofs of insanity.

Under these circumstances I am at a loss to know, upon what principle, the trifling minority of the sane could undertake to exercise such a power as this over the personal liberty of the *insane*, and thus deprive them of their most important rights, as citizens of a free country. It is evident, that if (as some assert to be the fact) the sane should all happen to belong to the same party in politicks, the exercise of this power would become at once the most irresistible political engine ever put at work ; for it being an established point of faith with the members of each party, that the leaders of the other are nothing less than *stark mad*, no sooner could a man come to any influence on the other side, than he would be accommodated with rooms in the insane hospital. I learn too, that this political mania, when once well worked into the blood, is the most incurable species of madness a person can be taken with ; so that this establishment would be forthwith furnished to the full, with *governours, senators, representatives* and *partisans*, there to remain for life, to the exclusion of patients of a less violent disorder, and much more open to cure. The foregoing objections, however, of whatever weight, may all safely be dismissed, provided the suggestion I am about to make shall be thought to carry any truth with it.

In the course of the calculations before mentioned, I was brought to revolve in my mind, whether after all, insanity would not turn out to be the natural state of man, and sanity the exception to the general rule ; for upon looking back into the works of various ancient authors, I find that the sages and philosophers of all past ages entertained the same opinion concerning the majority of the people, in their respective times, as the learned gentleman above quoted does of those in the present.

It is related of *Socrates*, that after having taken great pains to find out a wise man, and consulted with every description of persons, he finally concluded that all men were fools.

*Democritus*, a most celebrated philosopher of Abdera, held that all were mad, and on account of this opinion was esteemed so himself, until the learned Hippocrates going to visit him was not only convinced of his wisdom, but became also a convert to his opinions.

*Pliny* the younger, in his panegyrick on the Emperour Trajan, says ‘*Omnes actiones exprobare stultitiam videntur.*’

And *Cardan*, Lib. 3d de Sap. ‘*Pauci ut video sanæ mentis sunt.*’

The same sentiments are advanced in the works of Cicero, Virgil, and Horace, and a most erudite author of the sixteenth century observes, in a preface to one of his works, ‘give me but a little leave, and you shall see by what confessions, testimonies, arguments, I will evince it, that most men are mad, that they had as much need to go a pilgrimage to Anticyræ, (as in Strabo’s time they did,) as in our days they run to Compostella, our lady of Sichem or Lauretta, to seek help; that it is like to be as prosperous a voyage, as that of Guiana, and that there is much more need of hellebore than of tobacco.’ Virgil, in speaking of the Anticyræ referred to above, two towns in Greece to which people resorted to obtain hellebore, esteemed a cure for madness, says, ‘*Plures olim gentes navigabant illuc sanitatis causa,*’ which gives us some idea of the numbers that were afflicted with this calamity, at the time to which he refers. It would be but a waste of time to notice all the authorities that might be adduced to this point. I shall notice but two other authorities and those to show how extensive the term insane is, in the contemplation of the law. It is said by *Lyttleton* in his treatise on descents, ‘Also if a man which is of non sane memory, that is to say in latine, *qui non est compos mentis,*’ &c. And my Lord Coke remarks upon this. ‘Here *Lyttleton* explaineth a man of no sound memorie to be *non compos mentis*. Many times (as here it appeareth) the latin word explaineth the true sense, and calleth him not *amens*, *demens*, *furiosus*, *lunaticus*, *fatuus*, *stultus*, or the like, for *non compos mentis* is most sure and legall.’ And *Blackstone* gives in his Commentaries the following definition of *non compos mentis*; — ‘A lunatick, or *non compos mentis*, is one who hath understanding, but by disease, grief, or other accident, hath lost the use of his reason. A lunatick is indeed properly one that hath lucid intervals; sometimes enjoying his senses, and

sometimes not; and that frequently depending upon the change of the moon. But under the general name of *non compos mentis*, (which Sir Edward Coke says is the most legal name,) are comprised not only lunatics, but persons under frenzies, or who lose their intellects by disease; those that grow deaf, dumb, and blind, not being born so; or such in short, as are judged by the court of chancery incapable of conducting their own affairs.' And the civil law goes still further, and considers as *non compos*, whoever is in danger of wasting his estate by prodigality, and he is accordingly committed by the prætor, to the care of tutors or curators. These authorities sufficiently prove, I think, what has been the state of the world from the earliest times, and that the opinion I entertain is not singular, nor my calculations extravagant. Indeed had I followed the strict letter of the law, it is to be feared I should hardly have found exceptions enough, to have proved my rule.

‘Μανία γ’ ου παντι ομοια.’

*They all dote, though not alike.*

Having thus stated such principal objections to this establishment as relate to the *possibility* of carrying it into operation, I shall take leave to make a few observations upon the *policy* of it. Those who have paid any attention to political economy, and the government of large bodies of people, must be aware that it is often necessary to put up with many and great defects and abuses in the body politic, rather than hazard the consequences of sudden and important changes. Now let such persons judge whether it will be feasible to withdraw at once so large a number of people from the community, without bringing things into great confusion, and endangering the publick quiet. The largest portion of every people is made up of the labouring classes, who depend for subsistence upon the sale of the articles they manufacture—the produce they raise—or the call for their personal services—and it is apparent, both from the numbers and the general character and habits of the insane, that it is upon them they must principally rely. When these friends of the industrious, therefore, shall have gone into retirement, and their noble and generous mode of life given place to the meagre regimen of the hospital, who will answer for the despair of the immense number of persons thrown out of employ? Who will venture



into the market amongst the enraged venders of the best legs of mutton, the first cuts of beef, and the earliest messes of peas? Who can expect to walk the streets without being run down by your coach and chaise makers; getting a dressing from your fashionable tailors; and some hard rubs, now and then, from your most approved furniture makers? Who then but will be completely dished, in the estimation of those eminent gentlemen of colour, to whom we are indebted for our dinner parties; and liable to have the discordant clamour of those, who direct our usual evening amusement, played off upon him without measure? Nor is this all; what a vacating of seats in all your general assemblies and legislative bodies? What a desertion of important offices throughout the state and nation? Nor will the learned professions, as might be hoped, remain unaffected. How many deserted flocks will have to moan the loss of their worthy pastors? What a demand will arise for lawyers, upon the sudden falling off of the present excellent supply? How many of the sick will lay their deaths to the want of physicians, who would have died without a word, if under their hands? Such are some of the numerous evils, which would unavoidably ensue, and which surely can have no little influence upon the minds of intelligent men.

I shall not push my objections any further, by adducing the many other arguments which go to their support, lest a more general spirit of inquiry should be got up, than is perhaps to be wished for; and indeed I deem it a good reason for particular caution, and deliberation, in this business, that if the insane should happen to find out how things were going, they might forthwith take such measures, as would effectually put an end to any further discussion of the matter. Fully persuaded, as I am, that the difficulties connected with this plan are altogether insurmountable, and that this opinion does not proceed from any narrow views of the subject, but is the result of a very candid and extensive examination, aided by the observations of a long life, and much reading; and at the same time impressed with the belief that some method ought to be adopted, by which the present dissonant intermingling of the sane and insane may be avoided; I venture, after due reflection, most respectfully to propose, that the present plan be so amended, as that, instead of an

hospital for the *insane*, this establishment be exclusively appropriated to the use of the *sane*.

It would be impossible to enumerate, within the limits I have proposed to myself, all the advantages of such an arrangement. To notice a few of them only ;—we may observe, in the first place, that in this way all obstacles with regard to numbers immediately vanish ; for it is apparent from the preceding statement, that let but a strict examination be had upon admission, and there will not more persons be found in the whole community, properly qualified, than would serve to people a very moderately sized establishment.

The coercion too, which upon the other system would so often be indispensable, and the exercise of it so painful, becomes altogether unnecessary. For it being one of the most prominent and unaccountable characteristicks of the sane, to indulge a lamentable fondness for noiseless retirement, and reading, and speculation, and suchlike, gainless employments, and so to acquire a distaste for the active pursuits and splendid shows, and fashionable amusements, which enlighten, and adorn, and give a zest to society and life ; it is to be supposed, they will not be behind hand in taking advantage of so fair an opportunity as this, for gratifying their singular propensities.

Another circumstance, not altogether unworthy of consideration, is, that the funds of the institution will be greatly benefited, every person, sane or not, thinking his own immediate interest concerned in the subscription ; and we well know how good an effect such a notion has, both upon the magnitude of a donation, and the spirit in which it is bestowed.

It will be sufficient to observe, that all the various and weighty objections to the other plan, have no place in this, and that the many excellencies of the proposed amendment, are counterbalanced by no disadvantages whatever, that I can bring to mind. It will doubtless be remarked, that I have taken no notice in the foregoing remarks, of (that by far the most valuable part of the human family) the females. This did not happen from neglect or forgetfulness on my part, but from my not having the least question of their perfect sanity. I confess I was at one time a little shaken in this belief ; it being suggested to me as demonstrated, by the late unparallelled running up of bonnets, from two stories to

five,—that the women must be light-headed, or they would be unable to carry so great an additional weight on the shoulders. There seemed at first to be something in this argument. I was soon, however, convinced of its fallacy, by receiving credible information of the true nature of these machines. They were constructed, it seems, to supply the place of three articles of a lady's dress, formerly much used, but now entirely laid aside, viz. a pair of pockets, back-board, and high heeled-shoes. Being of large capacity and capable of containing much air, when there is any thing of a wind stirring, they operate in the way of a balloon, and have a great tendency to rise, and by being attached to the chin, extend the neck, straighten the back, and lift the whole body so that the toes merely come to the ground, and thus afford an admirable substitute for the cumbrous back-boards, and uncouth heels, formerly in vogue, besides giving a lightness and airiness to the gait, which is exquisitely enchanting. How often have I seen these lively beings come in this style down Park street, with a fine northwest wind in their favour, hardly touching upon the earth, and looking as if about to take their flight to those happy regions, which alone are worthy of them. That ancient and useful adjunct, the pocket, having become totally obsolete, and the indispensable, its successor, used merely for show, this new fashioned bonnet is also calculated to serve as a general reservoir, into which may occasionally be thrown an extra pocket handkerchief, a change of shoes, on walking to a party, an additional shawl, when the weather looks threatening, or any other odd articles, that are as well out of the way ; these things having at the same time no bad effect as ballast, for some think the ladies are in danger of being carried away with this fashion.

I trust this explanation will be as satisfactory to every one, as it has been to me ; and I never met with any thing else in the ladies, that could lead to the least suspicion of their insanity. There may be a question indeed whether they would be inclined to go with the sane into retirement ; naturalists asserting that they are more gregarious than men, and have an instinctive fondness for large towns. I am sensible that there are not wanting persons of so suspicious and ill-natured a turn, as to be always looking out for secret motives, in the actions of people, and casting round for some handle of that sort, with which to oppose every useful and important im-

provement. And it would not surprise me if some such were to suggest that I was not altogether serious and sincere in my proposal. I will only say, that in my estimation, this is not a subject to trifle about, and that a disinterested regard for the best interests of the community, and the advancement of this institution upon the most solid and beneficial grounds, could alone have induced me to come forward with the foregoing observations.



## ORIGINAL POETRY.



MR. EDITOR,

I KNOW not that the attempt has ever been made, by any of the various translators of Horace, to give his *Sapphics* an English dress in the same metre.—I send you the following rather as a *curiosity*, than as a specimen of elegant poetry. I believe, however, the version will be found tolerably correct. If you think it worthy of putting in type, you will, by publishing it, oblige  
B. —

### *Horace, Ode II. B. I. Translated.*

Jam satis terris, nivis atque diræ, &c.

AMPLY, already, has the sire of thunder  
Sent down his tempests, driving sleet and hailstones,  
Tossed our tall towers, with flaming hand, and scatter'd  
Fear through the city.

Trembled the nations, lest the times of Pyrrha,  
Fraught with strange omens, should return upon them,  
When hoary Proteus drove his herds to wander  
O'er the tall mountains.

When to the *elm tops*, clung the scaly millions ;  
(Seats where the ring doves often lov'd t' assemble.)  
And in the sea above them, swam the wild does,  
Trembling with terror !

Driven back with fury from the Tuscan ocean  
Turbid and swelling, have we seen the Tiber  
Prostrate the shrine of Numa, and the temples  
Sacred to Vesta.